The package aims at providing a sustainable support to farmers through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, assured irrigation facilities, subsidiary income opportunties, etc.

(c) and (d) The Tenth Plan Working Group of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education recommended an amount of Rs. 25,000 crore, approximately 1% of GDP of agriculture and allied sectors. The research efforts encouraged during the last 20 years in the agriculture sector are as follows:

- Harnessing modern technology to develop quality seeds of high yielding varieties and planting material and breeder seeds to realize optimum production potential of other inputs.
- Crop improvement in oilseeds, millets, rice, wheat, mesta, sunnhemp, cotton vegetables and fruits.
- Agricultural engineering involving development of the number of farmer friendly equipments/implements including pos-harvest engineering, technology.
- Agricultural extension and education through Krishi Vigyan Kendras in various districts and State Agricultural Universities and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institutes.
- Development of Integrated Pest Management Approaches for sustainable agriculture.

The ICAR undertakes its activities with the network of its Krishi Vigyan Kendras in various districts and under its specialized research stations. State Agricultural Universities also undertake research in their areas. There is no proposal by the Government to establish Central Councils in each State.

Crisis in farm sector

1975. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farm sector has been experiencing severe crisis in the country for the past few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether Government have drawn any road map/chalked out any plan to bring the farm sector out of the crisis including suicide by farmers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the allocations being made for this sector during the coming Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Agriculture sector in the country has experienced deceleration in growth during the 9th and 10th Plan which has remained around 2% per annum. The major challenges faced by the sector include stagnant productivity, low investment, deteriorating profitability and lack of adequate infrastructural facilities.

(c) and (d) The Government has already taken a number of initiatives which include announcing Agriculture Credit Policy to increase flow of credit to the sector, Kisan Credit Card Scheme, revamping of cooperative credit structure, reforming agriculture market and launching of National Horticulture Mission etc. The agricultural growth is proposed to be improved to about 4% during the 11th Plan period through different measures and initiatives. In order to tackle the problem of suicide by farmers, the Government of India has sanctioned a rehabilitation package for 31 suicide prone Districts in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala, involving a total amount of Rs. 16978.69 crore. (The assistance provided to the farmers under the package includes ex-gratia assistance from Prime Minister Relief Fund, interest waiver, assured irrigation, seed replacement, watershed development, micro irrigation, horticulture development, extension services, and subsidiary income services.) In addition, the State Government have also taken several initiatives to redress the problems of the farmers.

Allocations for agriculture sector for 11th Five Year Plan has not yet been finalized.